

Message Text

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42

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, PFOR, AR, PE

SUBJECT: ARGENTINE GUARANTEES FOR THREATENED PERUVIAN STUDENTS

1. GOA HAS OFFICIALLY GUARANTEED THE SECURITY OF PERUVIAN STUDENTS IN ARGENTINA AND SMOOTHED POTENTIAL TENSIONS WITH PERU FOLLOWING THAT GOVERNMENT'S DENUNCIATION SEPTEMBER 6 OF DEATH THREATS AGAINST PERUVIAN STUDENTS IN LA PLATA. THE INCIDENT BEGAN IN EARLY SEPTEMBER WHEN 22 PERUVIAN STUDENTS WERE WARNED BY A GROUP CALLING ITSELF THE "ARMED RIGHTIST GROUP" TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY BY SEPTEMBER 20 OR FACE DEATH. THE PERUVIAN GOVT'S APPEAL FOR THE STUDENTS' SECURITY BROUGHT IMMEDIATE RESPONSE BY GOA. ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES ANNOUNCED A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION. IN LIMA SEPTEMBER 11, ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR TO PERU JORGE CHEVALIER TOLD A GROUP OF PARENTS THAT SUCH THREATS ARE NOT UNCOMMON BUT ARE RARELY CARRIED OUT AND ATTRIBUTED THEM TO "SICK MINDS WHOSE ONLY AIM IS TO DISCREDIT THE CUNTRY AND HARM ITS EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS." HE SAID THAT PERUVIAN STUDENTS WOULD BE FULLY PROTECTED IN ARGENTINA AND THAT THEY WERE FREE TO REMAIN OR LEAVE AND RETURN AS THEY WISHED.

2. OF SOME 4,000 PERUVIAN STUDENTS IN LA PLATA, ONLY 22 RECEIVED THE THREATS. MOST STUDENTS CLAIMED TO KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ANY DANGER UNTIL CONTACTED BY THE PERUVIAN EMBASSY IN

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BUENOS AIRES. THE PERUVIAN AIR FORCE HAS OFFERED STUDENTS

PASSAGE BACK TO PERU BUT NO MORE THAN A HANDFUL HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY.

3. A FONMINISTRY SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF SEPTEMBER 10 THAT THE THREATS FOLLOWED THE ARREST OF ABOUT 25 PERUVIAN STUDENTS IN ROUTINE ANTI-SUBVERSION INVESTIGATIONS IN LA PLATA. ALL BUT TWO OR THREE WERE RELEASED WITHIN 48 HOURS. SIX PERUVIAN STUDENTS ARRESTED IN EARLIER INCIDENTS WERE REPORTEDLY EXPELLED FROM ARGENTINA IN SEPTEMBER.

4. COMMENT. RELIABLE ACADEMIC SOURCES TOLD EMBOFF THAT FIGURE OF 4,000 PERUVIAN STUDENTS IN LA PLATA IS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT, ALTHOUGH A MUCH SMALLER NUMBER PROBABLY ATTEND UNIVERSITY FULL TIME. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF PERUVIAN "STUDENTS" ARE RESENTED FOR TAKING UP UNIVERSITY SLOTS AND LOCAL JOBS AND THAT THE THREATS AGAINST THEM MAY BE MORE A CASE OF ILL-WILL THAN EXTREMIST BENGENCEANCE. THE PERUVIAN APPEAL ON BEHALF OF ITS CITIZENS (MANY OF WHOM MIGHT WELL BE CONSIDERED POTENTIAL TROUBLEMAKERS AT HOME) IS NEVERTHELESS SIGNIFICANT IN THAT PERU IS THE FIRST SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY TO OFFICIALLY AND PUBLICLY REQUEST GUARANTEES OF PROTECTION FOR ITS NATIONALS IN ARGENTINA.
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